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Extracts relating to Mr Jimmy SAVILE

New Year List 1984

RTA My Committee did not feel that sufficient time had elapsed since Mr Savile's unfortunate revelations in the popular press in April of this year. He is much in the public eye and it is unlikely that the lurid details of his story will have been forgotten. I fear it would be best if Mr Savile were to wait a little longer.

PM The Prime Minister would like to recommend Mr Jimmy Savile but agrees that the new Year List would be too soon after the press revelations earlier this year: she would like Mr Savile considered for the Birthday list.

Birthday List 1984

RTA Mr Jimmy Savile. You will remember that we were on the point of recommending him for a knighthood in recognition of his good work, especially for Stoke Mandeville, when The Sun published some articles which suggested an unorthodox private life. The lapse of time has served only to strengthen the doubts felt about a knighthood for Mr Savile: those whom I have consulted now consider that a knighthood for Mr Savile would give rise to enough unfavourable comment to risk bringing the honours system into disrepute. This risk could be exacerbated by the way in which he himself treated an award. I am inclined to share these fears, and I have not therefore included his name in the list.

New Year List 1985

PM The Prime Minister would however like to revert to the idea of recommending MR JIMMY SAVILE. She feels that the press reports sometime ago have by now been generally forgotten and it would be an appropriate time to recognise Mr Savile's work for Stoke Mandeville in view of the publicity which that Hospital is now receiving.

RTA On Mr Jimmy Savile, I must express my own and Sir Kenneth Stowe's continuing misgivings. I acknowledge both the value of his work for Stoke Mandeville and the new public awareness of what has been done. But we remain worried. It is not just the interview and reports in the Sun and elsewhere in the spring of 1983, though they would, I feel, be quickly recalled. Fears have been expressed that Mr Savile might not be able to refrain from exploiting a knighthood in a way which brought the honours system into disrepute. These fears may be quite unjustified, but I should have preferred to run the name through the system again: his name was not discussed this time, but the concern on these lines which I reported last time was strongly felt.

New Year List 1985 (Contd.)

PM MR JIMMY SAVILE. The Prime Minister reluctantly accepts your advice against putting forward Mr Savile for a Knighthood. She considered promoting him to CBE but has decided on balance against that also.

Birthday List 1986

PM The recommendation for a Knighthood for Mr Brian Rix, which the Prime Minister accepts, has prompted her to ask that Mr Jimmy SAVILE's name should be continued to be borne in mind for future lists. I should be grateful if you could arrange for this to be done.

New Year Honours List, 1987

PM She is most disappointed that Mr Savile's name has not been recommended and is surprised to see your reference to certain press reports. She wonders how many more times his name is to be pushed aside, especially in view of all the great work he has done for Stoke Mandeville. She would therefore like you to consider further the inclusion of his name in this list.

RTA The case of Jimmy Savile is difficult. I attach some extracts from the comments about him in previous years. I have again consulted Sir Kenneth Stowe about him. Mr Savile is a strange and complex man. He deserves high praise for the lead he offers in giving quiet background help to the sick. But he has made no attempt to deny the accounts in the press about his private life two or three years ago. These would not be forgotten, were he to be honoured with a knighthood: and I think they they would have caused some anxiety in the public mind about the honours system even without the complication which now exists, and which I should have drawn to your attention specifically in my minute of 31 October, in relation to the current concern over AIDS. Given that, and the fact that sexual promiscuity is seen to be part of the problem, I think that it is a time for caution about this possible knighthood, which would certainly attract a great deal of attention and perhaps some unfavourable comment.

PM She is not pressing the case of Mr Jimmy Savile this time.